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Thinking and writing about the issue of women, means calling into question all of history and society. The reason for this is the unprecedented scale of the systematic exploitation of women.

From this viewpoint, the history of civilisation can be defined as the history of women's losses. During the course of this history – the history of God and his servants, of Lords and serfs, of Industry, Science and Art – man's patriarchal personality established itself. This was a loss to society as a whole; the outcome was a sexist society.

Sexism is both an instrument of power and at the same time a weapon, that throughout history came to be employed permanently in all systems of civilisation. Actually no social group has ever been exploited physically and psychologically to the same extent as women. The variety of forms of the exploitation of women is conspicuous. A women produces descendants. She serves as free labour. The jobs nobody wants to do fall upon her. She is an obedient slave. She is the permanent object of sexual desire. She is an advertising device. She is valuable merchandise, indeed she is the queen of all wares. She builds the foundations upon which a man can produce and reproduce his power as a continuous instrument

of violence. We can accurately describe the 5000-year history of civilisation as a "culture of rape".

In the Age of Capitalism, sexism was employed particularly perfidiously as an ideological instrument. Capitalism, which took over from sexist society, wasn't satisfied with using women simply as free labour in the home. It transformed her into a sex object, turned her into merchandise to be offered up for sale on the market. Whilst a man can only sell his labour, a woman is physically and psychologically entirely for sale. In this fashion the most dangerous form of slavery comes into being. The system assigns a strategic role to the dominance over women in connection with the spread of exploitation and power. As the traditional repression of women expands, every man becomes a partner in power. Thus society is overwhelmed by the syndrome of total power expansion. Women's status bestows on patriarchal society both the feeling and the concept of boundless domination.

To consider woman as the biologically incomplete sex, is pure ideology and a product of the patriarchal mentality. This doctrine is an integral part of the whole scientific, ethical and political effort to present this status as normal. It is sad that women themselves have become used to taking this paradigm for granted. The naturalness and sacred inviolability of this supposed inferior status, which various peoples have subscribed to for millennia, is just as valid for women and moulds their thought and behaviour. Thus we must always bear in mind that no ethnic group, no class, no nation has ever been as systematically subjected to slavery as have women. The history of women's slavery has yet to be written and the history of freedom is still awaiting its authoresses.

Through the fact that women grew used to slavery, a hierarchy was established and the way was opened for the enslavement of other sections of society. Slavery of men came subsequent to the slavery of women. The difference between slavery based on gender and the slavery of a class or a nation is that as well as far-reaching, subtle repression it is guaranteed through emotionally-loaded lies.

It was slavery of women throughout society that paved the way for all other forms of hierarchy and state structures. This was disastrous not only for women but also for society as a whole, apart from a small group of hierarchical, statist powers.

That is why any path leading to a profound criticism of the patriarchal ideology and its dependent institutions was passed over. One of the most important building-blocks of this system is the family as an institution. The family is a small state conceived by men. The meaning of the family throughout the whole history of civilisation lies in the strength bestowed on it by the rulers and the state apparatus. The orientation of the family towards male dominance and, through that, its successfully-attained function as nucleus for statist society guarantee that women carry out limitless, unpaid work. At the same time they raise children, meeting the state requirement for a sufficient population and serve as role models for the spread of slavery right across society.

If we don't recognize the fact that the family is a micro-model of the state, a competent analysis of middle-eastern society is impossible. Man in the middle east, having lost all along the line, takes it out on the woman. The more he is publicly humiliated, the more the resulting aggression will be focused against the woman. The man, helpless and enraged because he can't defend himself from his society, behaves like a tyrant in the family and turns violently against wife and children. With the so-called "honour killing", the man who allows his values to be trampled in society, tries to take out his rage on the woman.

Regarding middle-eastern society, I must add that the traditional influences of the patriarchal, statist society have in no way melded with the influences of more modern forms of western civilisation, but rather form a conglomeration that can be compared to a Gordian knot.

Analysing the concepts of power and domination with reference to man, turns out to be extremely difficult. It is less the woman who refuses any change, than the man. Abandoning the role of domi-

nant male would leave the man feeling like a ruler who has lost his kingdom. So we must show him that it is precisely this hollow form of domination, that keeps him from freedom and makes him a reactionary.

Such analyses are more than just theoretical observations, because they possess existential meaning for the Kurdish struggle for liberation. The freedom of the Kurdish people can be viewed as inseparably bound to women's freedom, which is why we organised ourselves accordingly. If our aspiration to freedom has not been defeated despite the attacks by imperial powers and local reactionary forces, a large, invaluable share of the credit is due to the Free Women's Movement and the awareness that it brought about. In our opinion there can be no free Kurdistan without free women.

This philosophical and social viewpoint is by no means a tactical political manoeuvre to draw women into the struggle. Our aim is to construct a democratic society, during which process men will undergo a change. I believe that in the analysis of our experience of struggle to date we have come to comprehend spoiled, dominating, oppressive, exploitive man in the patriarchal society. This was the most adequate answer that I could find regarding woman's striving for liberation: get hold of patriarchal man, analyse him and "kill" him. I would like to go a step further. I will dare to redesign man with a peace-loving personality. Classical man will be analysed and "killed" to smooth the way for love and peace. In this sense I consider myself to be a worker in the struggle for women's liberation.

Contradiction between the sexes has a 5000-year history and constitutes the fundamental struggle of the 21st century. Women are putting up vehement resistance. It is thanks to this struggle that the problem is apparent today. There have been some outstanding female personalities in history who left a mark through their lives, their thoughts and their actions. This opposition by women shows us something: without the struggle against the patriarchal ideology and morals, against their influence on society and against patriarchal individuals, we cannot achieve freedom in our lives, nor

construct a true democratic society – so socialism cannot be put into effect. People aren't just longing for democracy, they want a democratic society without sexism. Without equality of the sexes, any call for freedom and equality is pointless and illusory. Just as peoples have the right to self-determination, women should determine their own destiny. This is not a matter that can be put aside or postponed. On the contrary, in the setting up of a new civilisation, women's liberty will be essential in establishing equality. In contrast with the experiences with real socialism and in national struggles for freedom, I believe that women's liberation is more significant than the liberation of classes or nations.

From the experience of our struggle I know that women's fight for liberation has to face extremely strong opposition as soon as it enters the political sphere. However, without victory in the political arena, there can be no lasting achievement. A victory in the political arena doesn't mean that women will seize power. Quite the opposite, the fight against statist and hierarchical structures means creating such structures that are not state-oriented but lead to a democratic and ecological society where the sexes will be free. Thus not only women but humanity as a whole will win.